THE MASK
image
31
JULY
$1.95
$2.70
CANADA
DIRECT SALES
0 31111
7 09853 08102 9

image® COMICS PRESENTS:

story & art
SAM KIETH

finishes
JIM SINCLAIR

lettering
KELL-O-GRAPHICS

color
STEVE OLIFF
and **OLYOPTICS**

logo
CHANCE WOLF

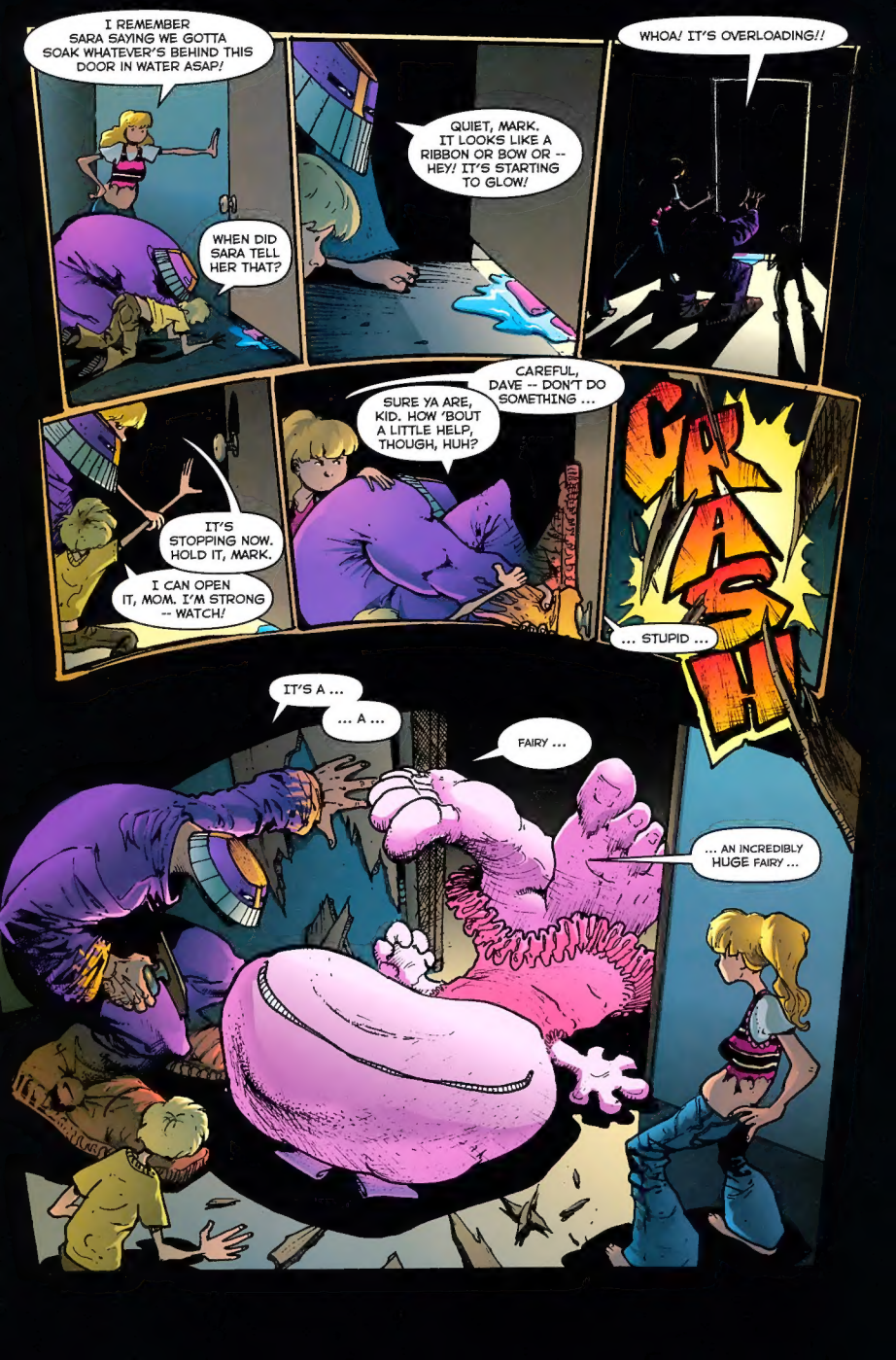
film output
TONY KELLY
and **KELL-O-GRAPHICS**

OLYOPTICS:
Tracey Anderson, Stacy Cox, Michael "Jerm" Jeremiah, Patti Stratton Jordan, Chris "Bar-BQ" McHugh, Tami L. Pleck, Quinn Supplee.

FOR IMAGE COMICS

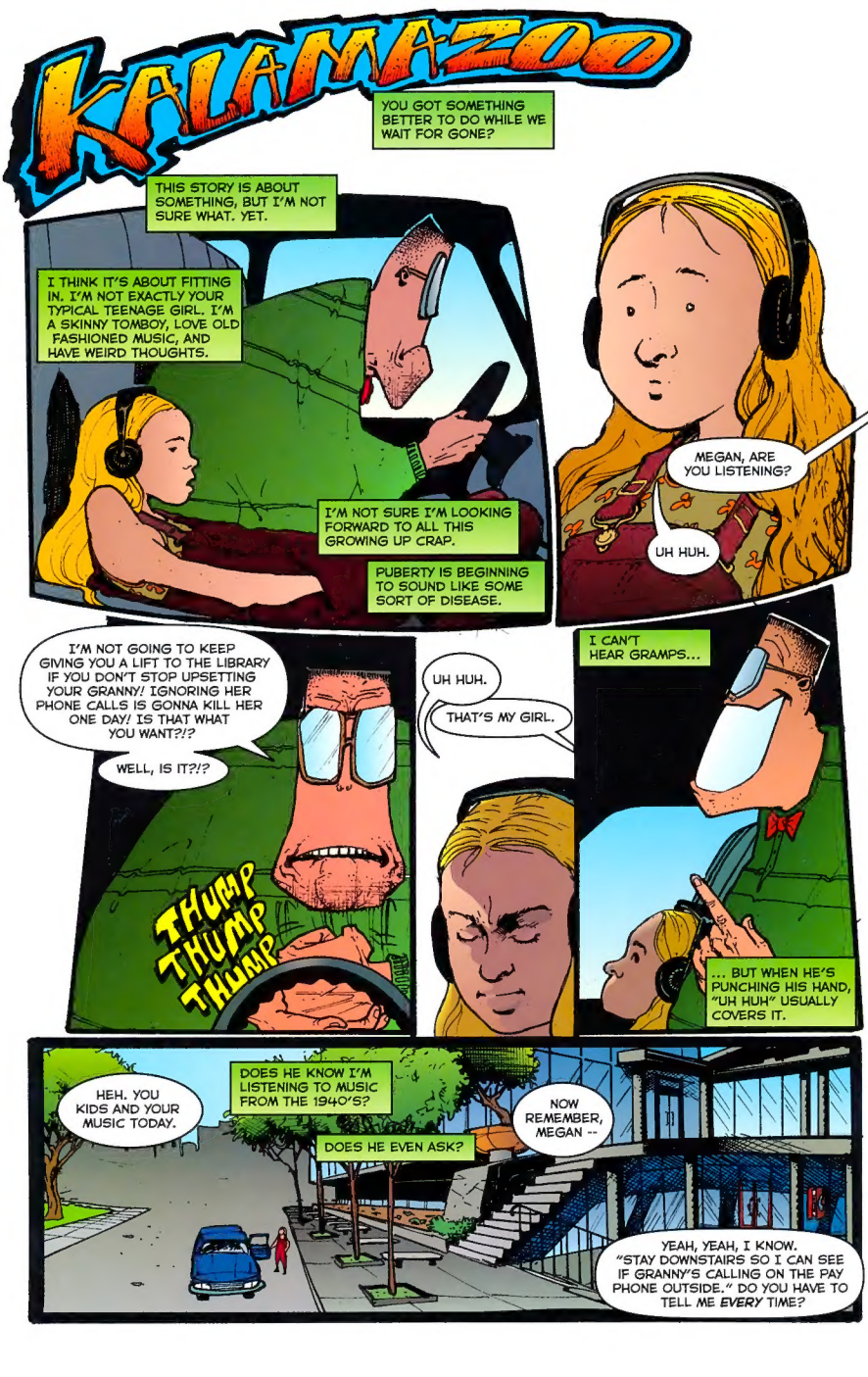
Executive Director: LARRY MARDER
Art Director: DOUG GRIFFITH
Production Manager: RONNA VLADIC
Graphic Design: KENNY FELIX
Communications Director: BRENT BRAUN
Accounting Administrator: LEE PATIN
Director of Sales: BOB MATSON

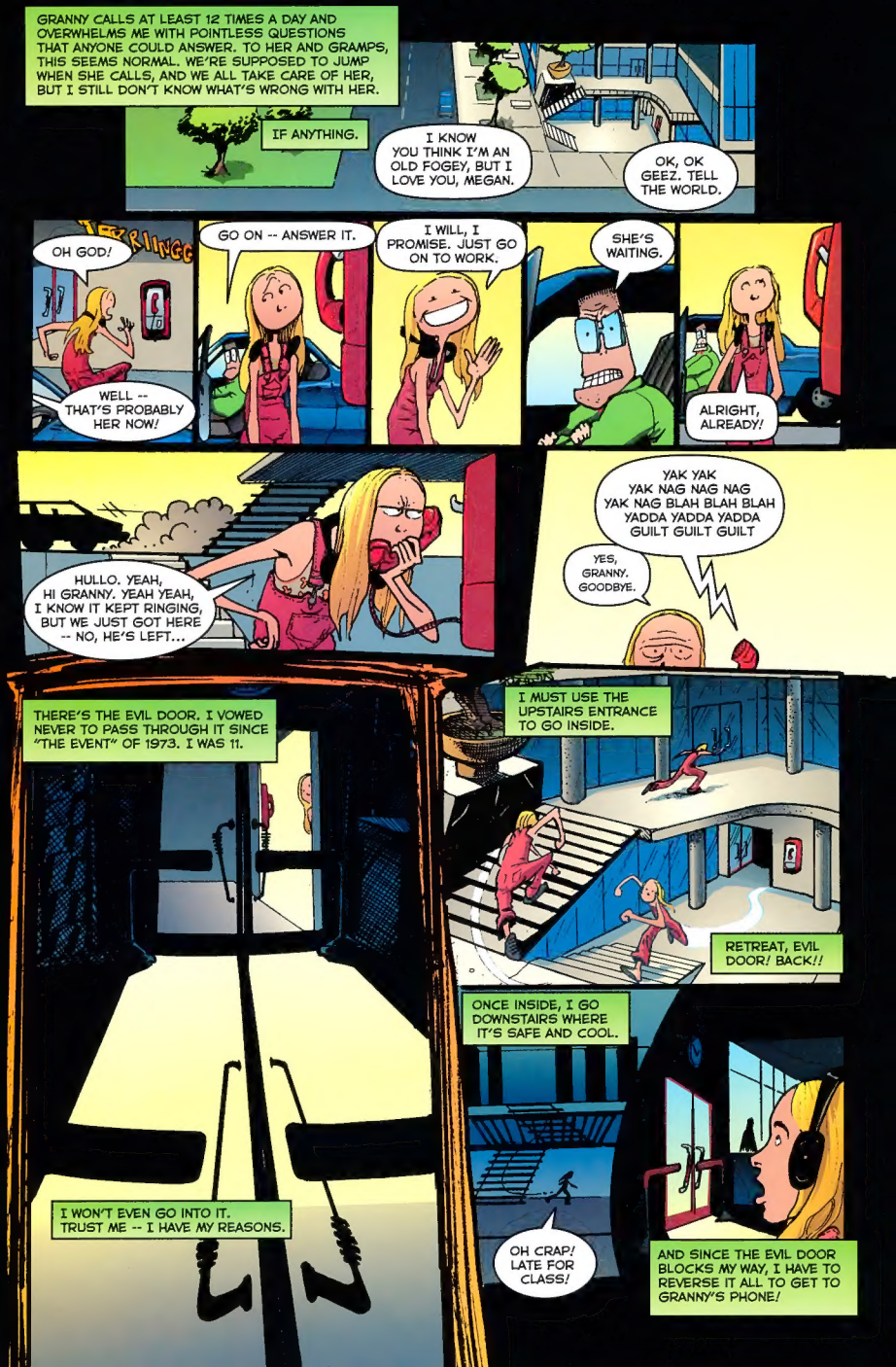
MAXX #31, JULY 1997. FIRST PRINTING. An Image Comics Title published by Image Comics, 1440 N. Harbor Blvd, #305 Fullerton, CA 92635. Entire contents ™ and © 1997 Sam Kieth, all rights reserved. Any similarities to persons living or dead is purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Sam Kieth. Powered donuts?. Send correspondence to: Sam Kieth, 4363 Hazel Avenue, Suite 1-285, Fair Oaks, California, 95628. (nghtime@aol.com). Publishers and creator assume no responsibility for unsolicited materials or classified ads.
PRINTED IN CANADA.


I REMEMBER SARA SAYING WE GOTTA SOAK WHATEVER'S BEHIND THIS DOOR IN WATER ASAP!
WHEN DID SARA TELL HER THAT?
QUIET, MARK. IT LOOKS LIKE A RIBBON OR BOW OR -- HEY! IT'S STARTING TO GLOW!
WHOA! IT'S OVERLOADING!!
IT'S STOPPING NOW. HOLD IT, MARK.
I CAN OPEN IT, MOM. I'M STRONG -- WATCH!
SURE YA ARE, KID. HOW 'BOUT A LITTLE HELP, THOUGH, HUH?
CAREFUL, DAVE -- DON'T DO SOMETHING ...
CRASH!
... STUPID ...
IT'S A ...
... A ...
FAIRY ...
... AN INCREDIBLY HUGE FAIRY ...

NO, NO -- IT'S A 300- POUND WHITE IS.
WHAT'S A FAIRY?
IT LOOKS LIKE A GIANT FOOTBALL TO ME.
YOU SEE AN IS, HUH?
YEP.
OBVIOUSLY, WE'RE ALL SEEING WHAT WE WANT TO SEE.
WHAT HAPPENED TO IT, MOM? WHY'S IT SO BIG?
I DUNNO, BUT ...
... WE GOTTA GET IT TO WATER, AND QUICK, LIKE SARA SAID!
HEY DAVE -- WHAT'S A 300- POUND FOOTBALL EAT?
THIS IS SERIOUS, MARK.
I THINK ...
HEY JULIE -- MAYBE THIS IS THAT WHITE IS THAT ESCAPED FROM YOUR OUTBACK INTO OUR WORLD UNCHANGED. REMEMBER?
WHATEVER. :PANT PANT: KEEP PUSHING.
WHERE WE GOIN'?
SARA'S GOT NO BATHTUB -- STEVE TOLD ME THERE'S A TUB EVERYONE SHARES IN THE BASEMENT.
THANK GOD IT FITS... WELL, SORT OF... I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO MY IS, TO MAKE IT SWELL UP?
YOU MEAN YOUR FOOTBALL. I LIKE THE CLEATS ON HIS FEET.
I HOPE IT DOESN'T SAY SOMETHING ABOUT MY MASCULINITY THAT I'M SEEING PINK FAIRIES.
MARK, GO GET GONE. AND HURRY! HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.

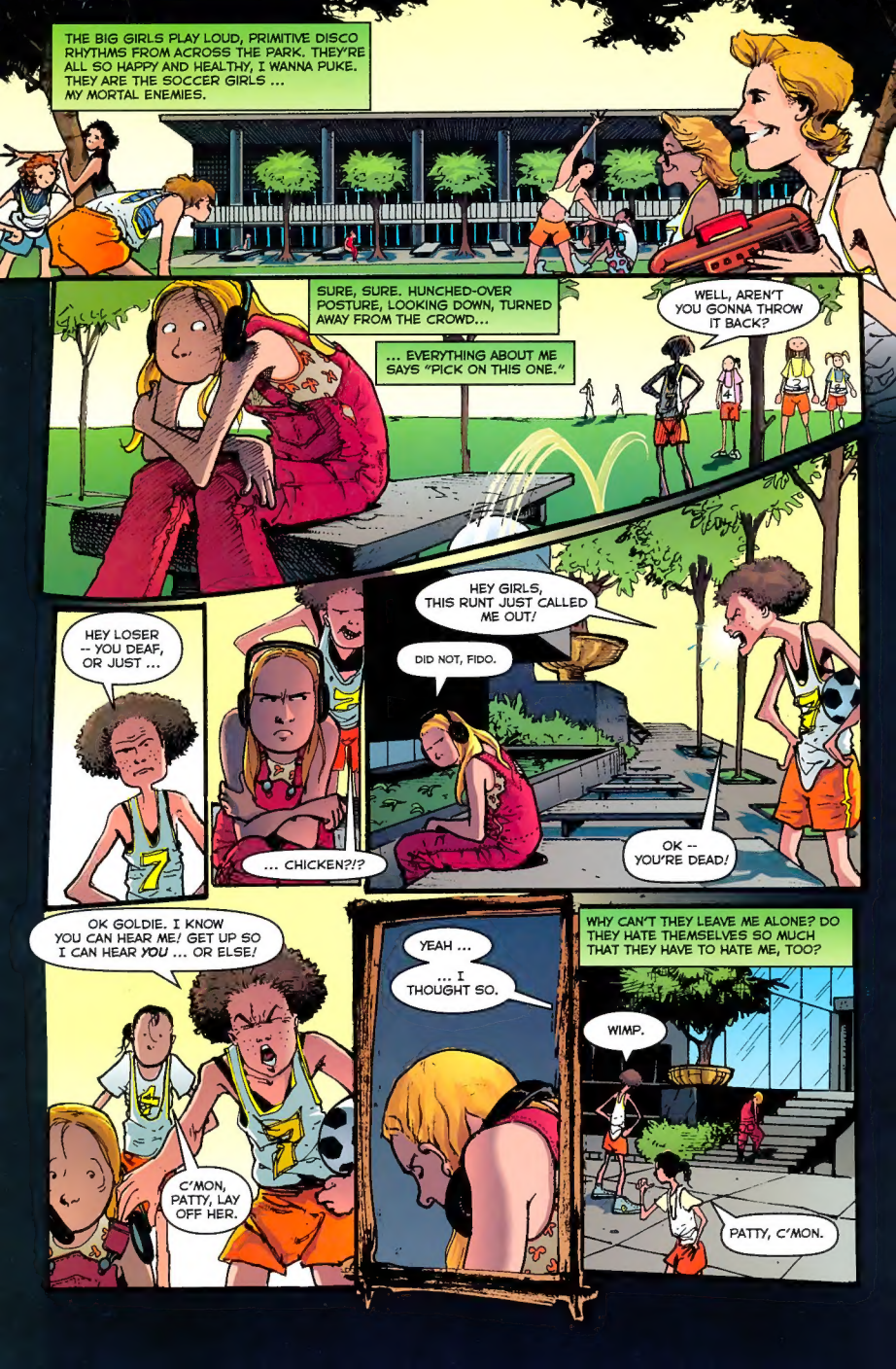
GONE?!? YOU TRUST HIM AFTER WHAT HE DID TO SARA, LETTING HER DISAPPEAR INTO HER OWN OUTBACK?
YOU GOT A BETTER IDEA? ONCE AGAIN WE'RE UP TO OUR BUTTS IN SUPERNATURAL CRAP. IF GONE MEANT WHAT HE SAID ABOUT LOSING SARA ACCIDENTALLY, HERE'S HIS CHANCE TO FIND HER, SEND THIS BLIMPO IS BACK TO MY HEAD, AND PUT THINGS RIGHT.
FAIRY.
WHATEVER. LISTEN, DAVE -- I'M GONNA TELL YOU SOMETHING I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYBODY -- NOT MARK OR SARA -- NOBODY. I KNEW THE GIRL PRETTY WELL, AND I DON'T THINK SHE'D MIND IF I TOLD YOU.
OK.
HER NAME WAS MEGAN. SHE WAS A SKINNY GIRL, AROUND 14 OR SO, LIVING WITH HER GRANDPARENTS.
JULIE, WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO DO WITH A GIANT FAIR-- UH, IS?


KALAMAZOO
YOU GOT SOMETHING BETTER TO DO WHILE WE WAIT FOR GONE?
THIS STORY IS ABOUT SOMETHING, BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT. YET.
I THINK IT'S ABOUT FITTING IN. I'M NOT EXACTLY YOUR TYPICAL TEENAGE GIRL. I'M A SKINNY TOMBOY, LOVE OLD FASHIONED MUSIC, AND HAVE WEIRD THOUGHTS.
I'M NOT SURE I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO ALL THIS GROWING UP CRAP.
PUBERTY IS BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE SOME SORT OF DISEASE.
MEGAN, ARE YOU LISTENING?
UH HUH.
I'M NOT GOING TO KEEP GIVING YOU A LIFT TO THE LIBRARY IF YOU DON'T STOP UPSETTING YOUR GRANNY! IGNORING HER PHONE CALLS IS GONNA KILL HER ONE DAY! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?!?
WELL, IS IT?!?
THUMP THUMP THUMP
UH HUH.
THAT'S MY GIRL.
I CAN'T HEAR GRAMPS...
... BUT WHEN HE'S PUNCHING HIS HAND, "UH HUH" USUALLY COVERS IT.
HEH. YOU KIDS AND YOUR MUSIC TODAY.
DOES HE KNOW I'M LISTENING TO MUSIC FROM THE 1940'S?
DOES HE EVEN ASK?
NOW REMEMBER, MEGAN --
YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW. "STAY DOWNSTAIRS SO I CAN SEE IF GRANNY'S CALLING ON THE PAY PHONE OUTSIDE." DO YOU HAVE TO TELL ME *EVERY* TIME?

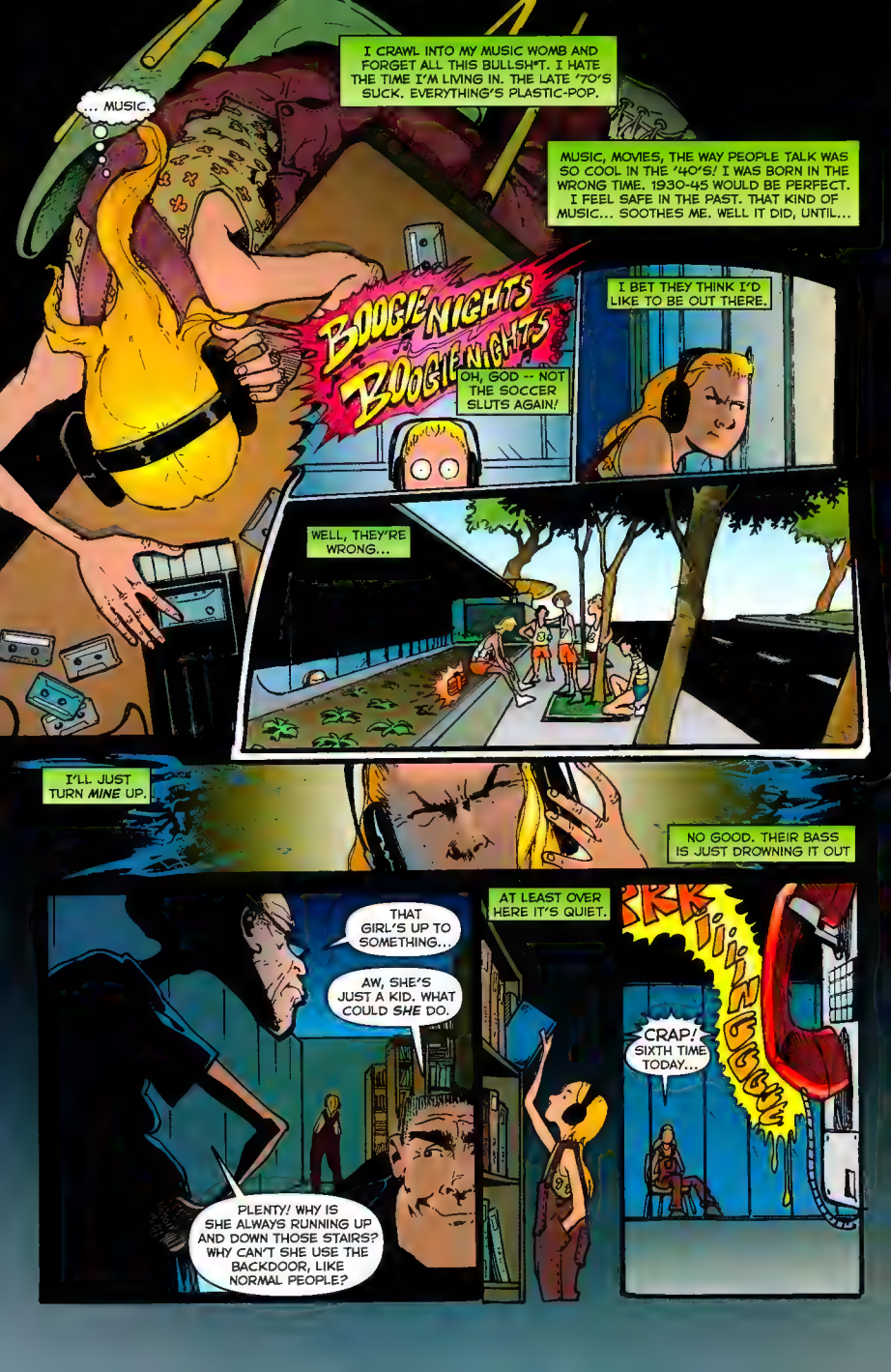

GRANNY CALLS AT LEAST 12 TIMES A DAY AND OVERWHELMS ME WITH POINTLESS QUESTIONS THAT ANYONE COULD ANSWER. TO HER AND GRAMPS, THIS SEEMS NORMAL. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO JUMP WHEN SHE CALLS, AND WE ALL TAKE CARE OF HER, BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER.
IF ANYTHING.
I KNOW YOU THINK I'M AN OLD FOGEY, BUT I LOVE YOU, MEGAN.
OK, OK GEEZ. TELL THE WORLD.
OH GOD!
BRRRINGG
WELL -- THAT'S PROBABLY HER NOW!
GO ON -- ANSWER IT.
I WILL, I PROMISE. JUST GO ON TO WORK.
SHE'S WAITING.
ALRIGHT, ALREADY!
HULLO. YEAH, HI GRANNY. YEAH YEAH, I KNOW IT KEPT RINGING, BUT WE JUST GOT HERE -- NO, HE'S LEFT...
YAK YAK YAK NAG NAG NAG YAK NAG BLAH BLAH BLAH YADDA YADDA YADDA GUILT GUILT GUILT
YES, GRANNY. GOODBYE.
THERE'S THE EVIL DOOR. I VOWED NEVER TO PASS THROUGH IT SINCE "THE EVENT" OF 1973. I WAS 11.
I MUST USE THE UPSTAIRS ENTRANCE TO GO INSIDE.
RETREAT, EVIL DOOR! BACK!!
ONCE INSIDE, I GO DOWNSTAIRS WHERE IT'S SAFE AND COOL.
I WON'T EVEN GO INTO IT. TRUST ME -- I HAVE MY REASONS.
OH CRAP! LATE FOR CLASS!
AND SINCE THE EVIL DOOR BLOCKS MY WAY, I HAVE TO REVERSE IT ALL TO GET TO GRANNY'S PHONE!

I HATE THE OUTSIDE. TOO MUCH NOISE, FRESH AIR, AND DISTRACTION.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE BIG DEAL IS ABOUT GROWING UP. ALL ADULTS I KNOW ARE IDIOTS. AT LEAST I CAN *FEEL* STUFF.
WHEN PEOPLE GET OLDER, I THINK SOMETHING IN THEM DIES. WHY ELSE ARE ADULTS SO CONDESCENDING TO TEENAGERS?
I LIKE THE DOWNSTAIRS LIBRARY, WHICH IS COOL, DARK AND MOULDY. I HIDE AND LISTEN TO MY '40'S MUSIC. NOTHING EVER CHANGES IN THE LIBRARY. IT'S GREAT.
GRAMPS MAKES ME TAKE THIS HEALTH CLASS AT THE LIBRARY.
IT'S TORTURE.
BUT IT'S NOT A *JOKE*, OR A *PHASE*... IT'S *REAL!!* WHY CAN'T ADULTS SEE THAT?
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU? ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, *GROW!!!* YOU'RE GOING THROUGH PUBERTY!
MY GOD, SHE THINKS WE'RE 9 YEARS OLD.
DEODORANTS.
CRUSHES.
TRAINING BRAS.
DATING.
PUBIC HAIR!
IT'S ALL A NORMAL, HEALTHY PART OF THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL CHANGES THAT AWAIT YOU ON YOUR SPECIAL JOURNEY TO WOMANHOOD!

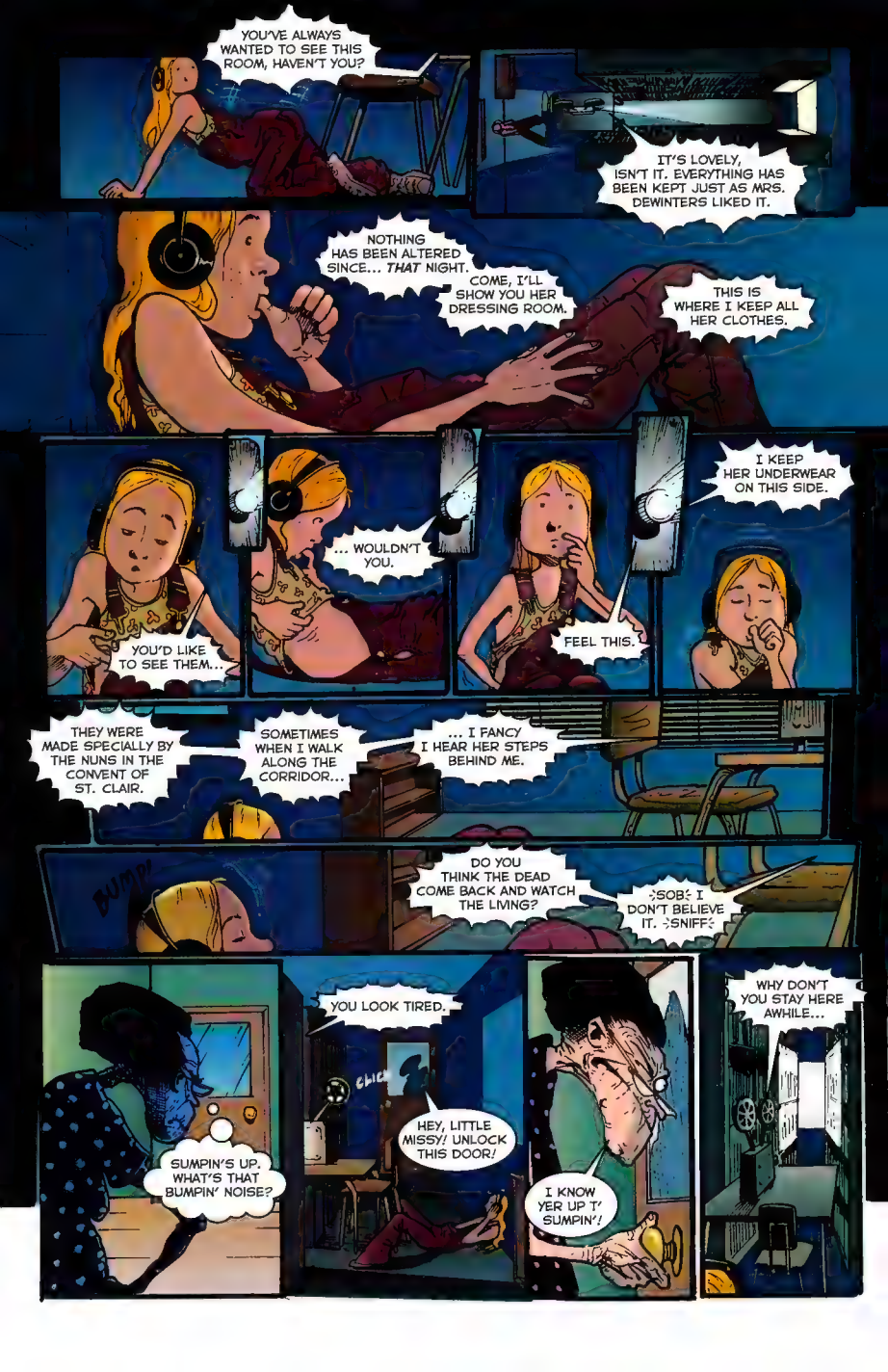
OK, LET'S SAY HELLO TO MS. TAMPON.
HELLO, MISS TAMPON.
SHUT UP, SALLY!
YOU SHUT UP!
GIRLS, SETTLE DOWN!
THIS IS EMBARRASSING AND PATHETIC FOR EVERYONE. I GOTTA BAIL. IT'S THE ONLY HUMANE THING TO DO.
HEY, TEACHER -- CAN I GO TO THE BATHROOM?
OK, MEGAN, BUT DON'T RUN OFF LIKE LAST TIME.
THESE CLASSES ARE RUINING THE LIBRARY AS MY HAVEN. I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT BOOBS AND CRAMPS -- I JUST WANT TO LISTEN TO OLD-FASHIONED MUSIC AND ...
...ESCAPE.
:SIGH: EVERY TIME I GO UPSTAIRS, I HAVE TO WALK BY THIS ...
...CRAZY LADY...
... THAT MUMBLES TO HERSELF.
KIWI, KIWI...
SHE ALWAYS CREEPS ME OUT! I'M ALWAYS SURE SHE'S GONNA BITE MY LEG OR SOMETHING.
I NORMALLY HATE IT OUTSIDE, BUT ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN PUBERTY 101.


THE BIG GIRLS PLAY LOUD, PRIMITIVE DISCO RHYTHMS FROM ACROSS THE PARK. THEY'RE ALL SO HAPPY AND HEALTHY, I WANNA PUKE. THEY ARE THE SOCCER GIRLS ... MY MORTAL ENEMIES.
SURE, SURE. HUNCHED-OVER POSTURE, LOOKING DOWN, TURNED AWAY FROM THE CROWD...
... EVERYTHING ABOUT ME SAYS "PICK ON THIS ONE."
WELL, AREN'T YOU GONNA THROW IT BACK?
HEY LOSER -- YOU DEAF, OR JUST ...
... CHICKEN?!?
HEY GIRLS, THIS RUNT JUST CALLED ME OUT!
DID NOT, FIDO.
OK -- YOU'RE DEAD!
OK GOLDIE. I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME! GET UP SO I CAN HEAR YOU ... OR ELSE!
C'MON, PATTY, LAY OFF HER.
YEAH ...
... I THOUGHT SO.
WHY CAN'T THEY LEAVE ME ALONE? DO THEY HATE THEMSELVES SO MUCH THAT THEY HAVE TO HATE ME, TOO?
WIMP.
PATTY, C'MON.

I DON'T KNOW WHY BOYS TEAM UP AND PULL THAT "HEY, GIRL, MY FRIEND LIKES YOU" CRAP. TWO LITTLE PUNKS LIKE THIS SHOULDN'T BOTHER ME. I'M BIGGER 'N STRONGER THAN BOTH OF THEM, BUT WHEN THEY RAZZ ME, I WON'T STAND UP TO THEM.
C'MON YOU TWERPS -- JUST DO IT. GET IT OVER WITH.
WWOOSH
HEY! NOT MY HOMEWORK!
OH GREAT -- NOT THE EVIL DOOR AGAIN.
TAP TAP TAP TAP
HA HA HA...
WHATSAMATTER, BITCH? SCARED?
OK, PRIMATES! GIVE IT BACK!!!
♪MEG-AN'S AFRAID..♪
DAYS LIKE THIS, MY ONLY ESCAPE IS...

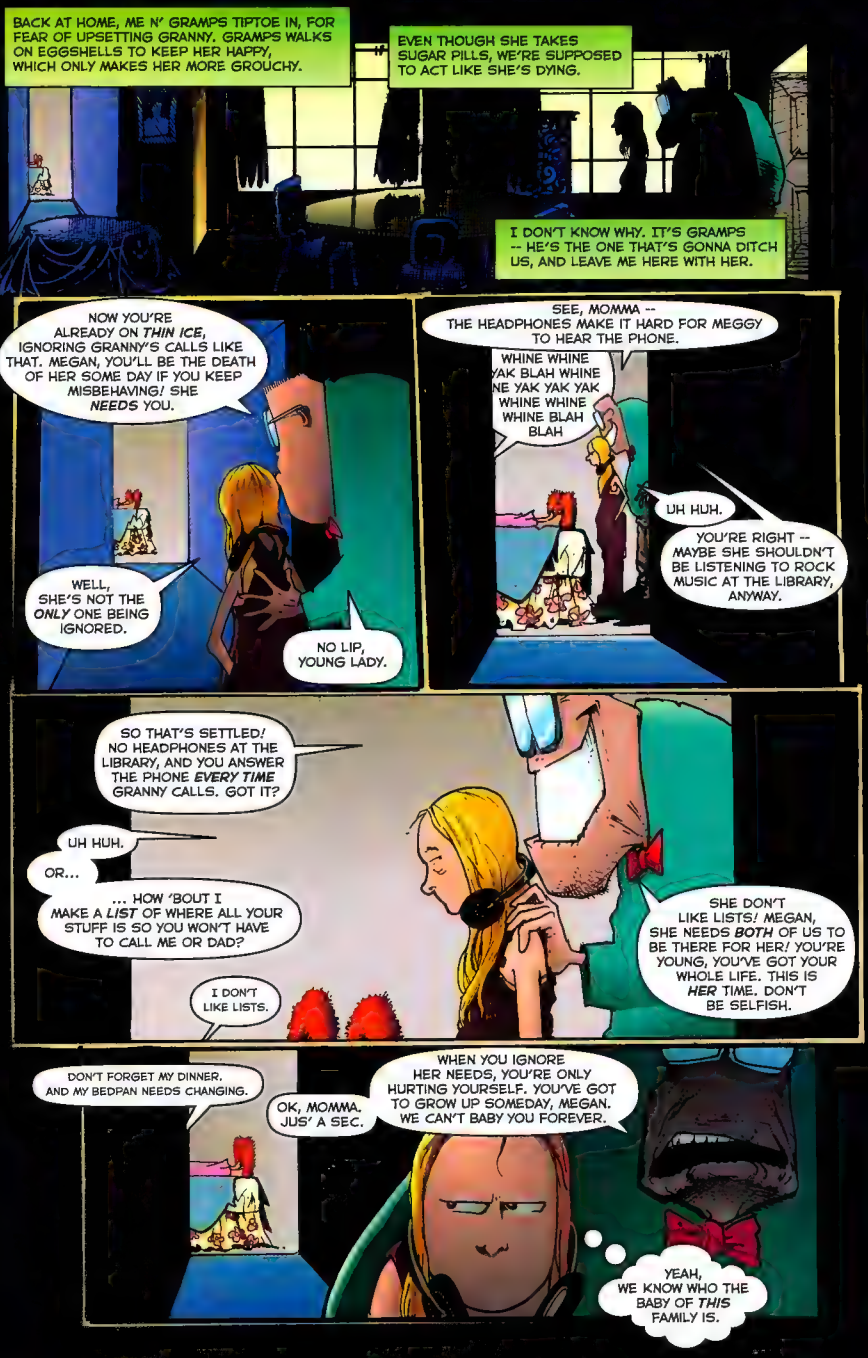

... MUSIC.
I CRAWL INTO MY MUSIC WOMB AND FORGET ALL THIS BULLSH*T. I HATE THE TIME I'M LIVING IN. THE LATE '70'S SUCK. EVERYTHING'S PLASTIC-POP.
MUSIC, MOVIES, THE WAY PEOPLE TALK WAS SO COOL IN THE '40'S! I WAS BORN IN THE WRONG TIME. 1930-45 WOULD BE PERFECT. I FEEL SAFE IN THE PAST. THAT KIND OF MUSIC... SOOTHES ME. WELL IT DID, UNTIL...
BOOGIE NIGHTS
BOOGIE NIGHTS
OH, GOD -- NOT THE SOCCER SLUTS AGAIN!
I BET THEY THINK I'D LIKE TO BE OUT THERE.
WELL, THEY'RE WRONG...
I'LL JUST TURN MINE UP.
NO GOOD. THEIR BASS IS JUST DROWNING IT OUT
THAT GIRL'S UP TO SOMETHING...
AW, SHE'S JUST A KID. WHAT COULD SHE DO.
PLENTY! WHY IS SHE ALWAYS RUNNING UP AND DOWN THOSE STAIRS? WHY CAN'T SHE USE THE BACKDOOR, LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE?
AT LEAST OVER HERE IT'S QUIET.
SKRK
TIINGGGG
CRAP! SIXTH TIME TODAY...

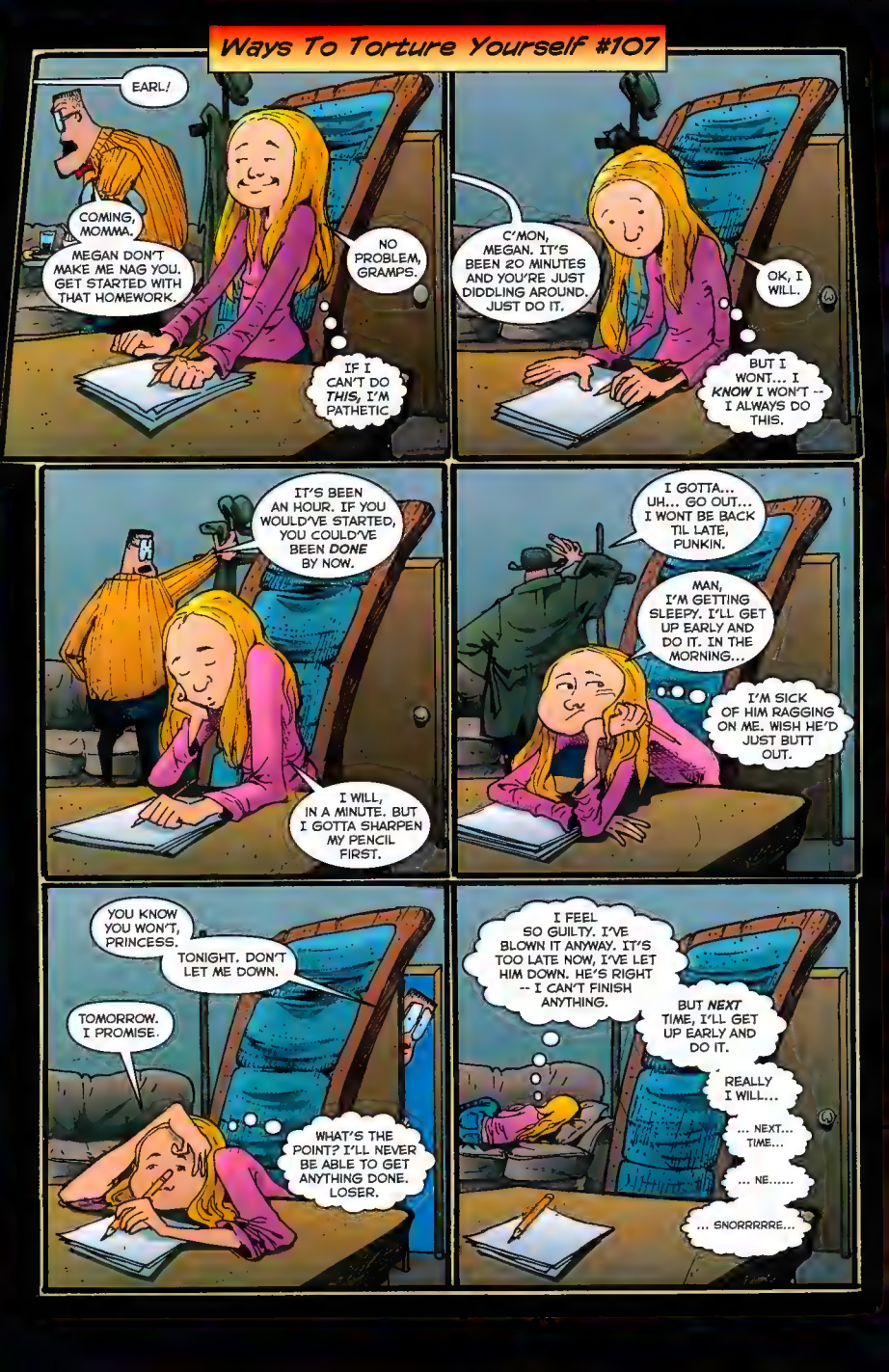
THE EVIL SOCCER GIRL MOCKS ME.
LOOK AT 'EM RUNNING AROUND, LAUGHING, HAVING FUN, GIGGLING LIKE IDIOTS. HORMONES HAVE TURNED THEIR BRAINS TO PUDDING. THEY'RE ACTING LIKE ANIMALS. DISGUSTING.
I'M TOO SKINNY TO EVER GROW UP AND BE LIKE THEM, ANYWAY.
THE LIBRARY LETS ME WATCH OLD MOVIES IN THE BACK HERE. I'VE BECOME HOOKED ON THIS ONE ABOUT A YOUNG GIRL...
... WHO LETS HER HUSBAND, MAXIM, TREAT HER LIKE A CHILD.
WHY? I THINK SHE *WANTS* TO BE AN ADULT, BUT SHE'S SCARED.
SEE, MAXIM'S FIRST WIFE, REBECCA, IS SOMEONE A GIRL COULD NEVER LIVE UP TO.
THE NEW WIFE THINKS MAXIM'S STILL IN LOVE WITH REBECCA ...
... SO SHE STAYS A CHILD ...
.. AFRAID TO COMPETE.
MY FAVORITE PART IS WHERE THE EVIL MRS. DANVERS GETS HER TO FEEL REBECCA'S UNDERWEAR.
NOT THAT I'M INTO THAT OR NOTHING.
IT'S JUST SO WEIRD FOR AN OLD MOVIE.


YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE THIS ROOM, HAVEN'T YOU?
IT'S LOVELY, ISN'T IT. EVERYTHING HAS BEEN KEPT JUST AS MRS. DEWINTERS LIKED IT.
NOTHING HAS BEEN ALTERED SINCE... THAT NIGHT.
COME, I'LL SHOW YOU HER DRESSING ROOM.
THIS IS WHERE I KEEP ALL HER CLOTHES.
I KEEP HER UNDERWEAR ON THIS SIDE.
... WOULDN'T YOU.
YOU'D LIKE TO SEE THEM...
FEEL THIS.
THEY WERE MADE SPECIALLY BY THE NUNS IN THE CONVENT OF ST. CLAIR.
SOMETIMES WHEN I WALK ALONG THE CORRIDOR...
... I FANCY I HEAR HER STEPS BEHIND ME.
BUMP!
DO YOU THINK THE DEAD COME BACK AND WATCH THE LIVING?
:SOB: I DON'T BELIEVE IT. :SNIFF:
SUMPIN'S UP. WHAT'S THAT BUMPIN' NOISE?
YOU LOOK TIRED.
CLICK
HEY, LITTLE MISSY! UNLOCK THIS DOOR!
I KNOW YER UP T' SUMPIN'!
WHY DON'T YOU STAY HERE AWHILE...

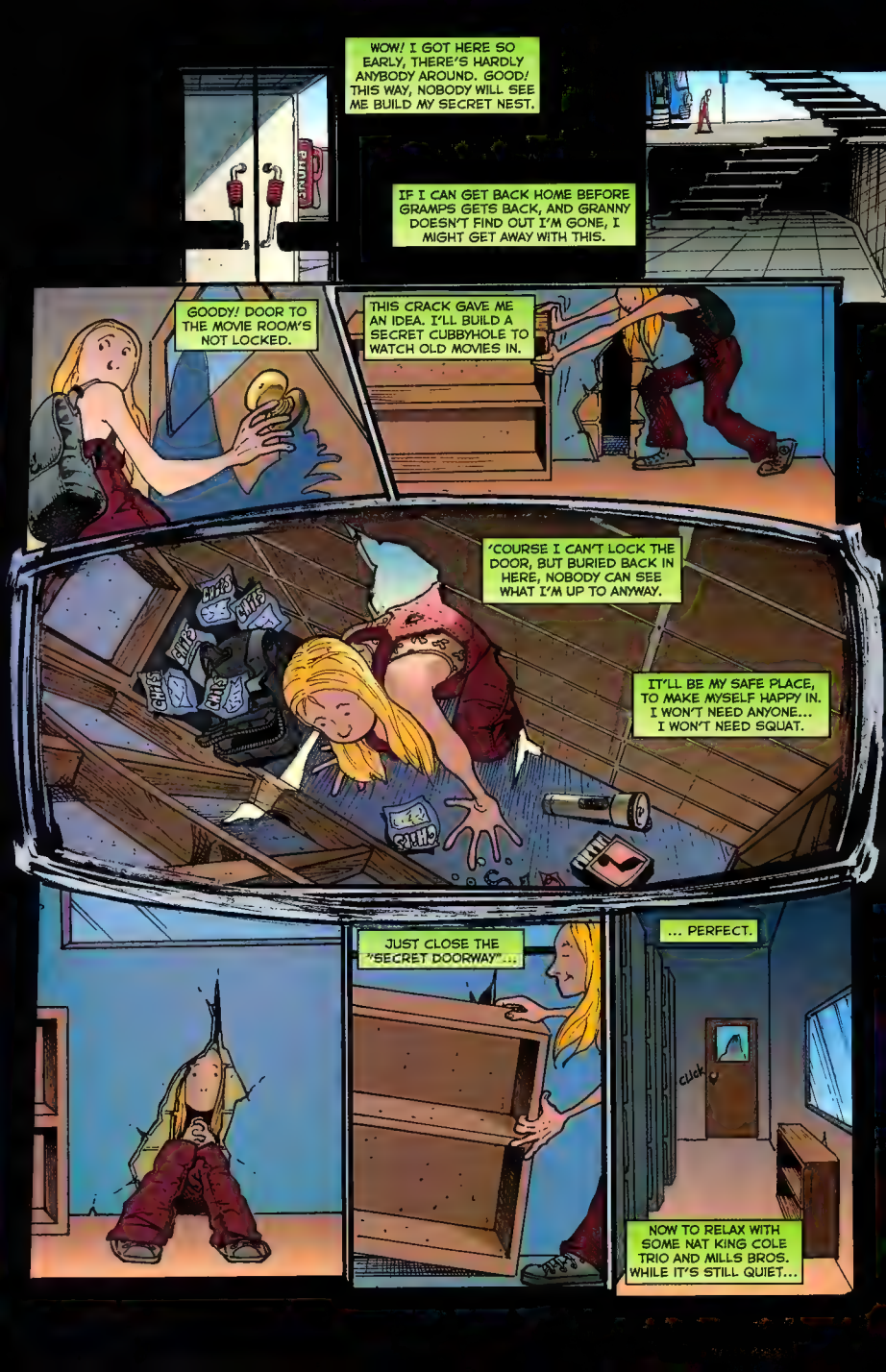
CAN YOU HEAR ME?!? OPEN UP!
... AND REST...
CRASH!
... LISTEN TO THE SEA...
GREAT! I BROKE THE WALL! HEY -- LOOKEE BACK HERE! WHAT A COOL LITTLE PLACE TO HIDE!
HMm. THIS GIVES ME AN IDEA. LET ME GET THESE HEADPHONES OFF.
IF YOU DON'T UNLOCK THE DOOR THIS INSTANT...
BANG BANG BANG
OH GOD!
BANG BANG BANG
... I'LL GET THE SECURITY GUARD!
CAN'T BREATHE!
AND I CAN'T BUTTON FAST ENOUGH!
... COMING! I JUST... SORRY...
OK, PROJECTOR OFF. OH CRAP! THE WALL!! THINK, THINK...
WHEW! LOOKS OK.
I'M COMING!
IF SECURITY HAS TO UNLOCK THIS DOOR...
NO, WAIT! I JUST HAVE TO OPEN THE...

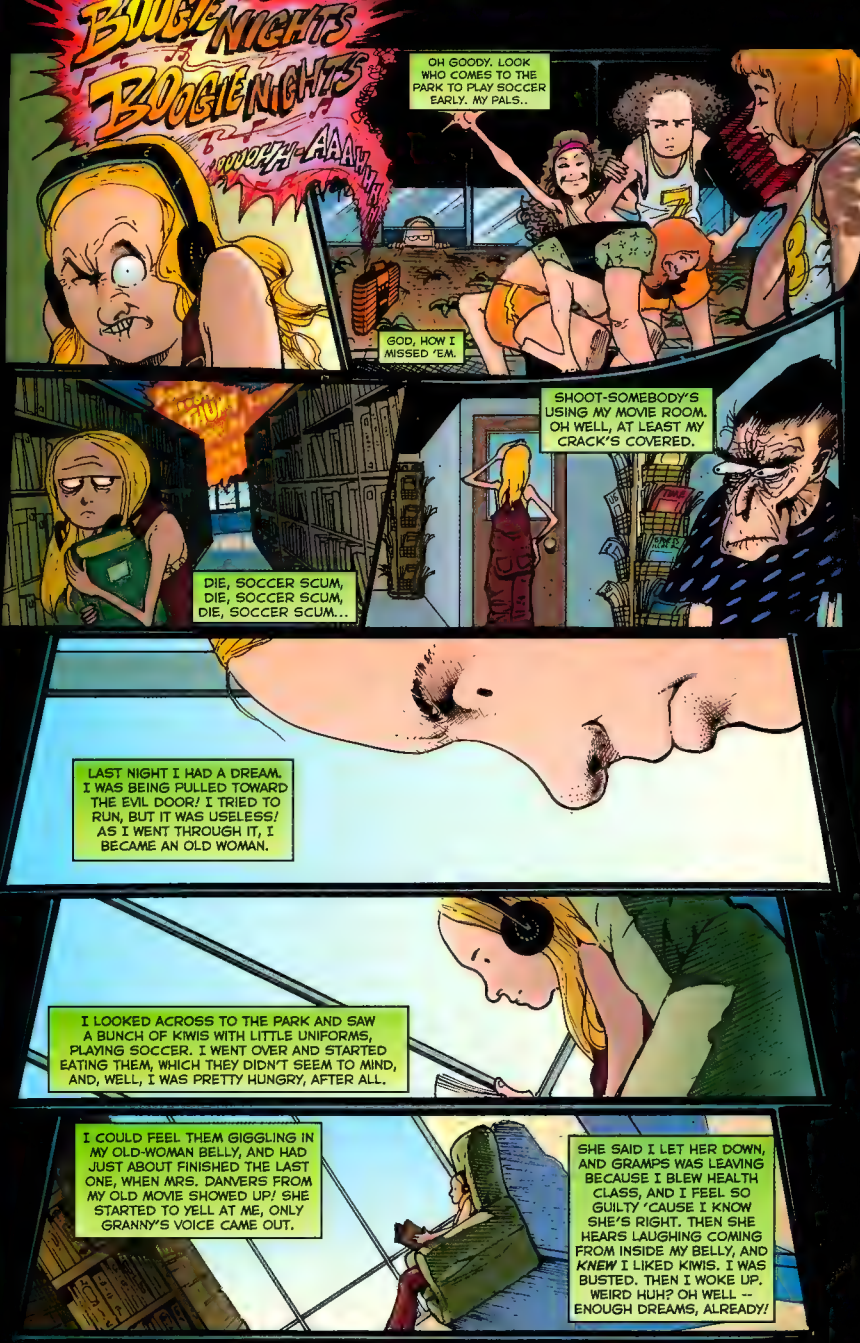
...SHADES...
OK, MISSY! IF I KNEW WHO YOUR PARENTS WERE, I'D CALL 'EM RIGHT NOW!!! AND IF I EVER CATCH YOU LOCKIN' THIS DOOR AGAIN...
... YER BANNED FROM THE LIBRARY!!!!
OK, OK, OK...
AND QUIT TYIN' UP THAT PHONE, TALKIN' TO YER BOYFRIENDS!!!!!!
RING RING RING RING RING
SHE'S YELLING IN PUBLIC! TOTAL HUMILIATION!!!
OH GOD -- EVERYONE'S STARING AT ME.
OK, IF THERE WAS ANYONE AROUND, THEY'D BE STARING AT ME.
HEY! THE PHONE'S THAT WAY!
NOT FOR ME.
CRAZY LADY, CRAZY LADY.
IT STOPPED. THANK GOD SHE GAVE UP.
17 RINGS, NUMBNUT.
KIWI, KIWI.
HONK!
BUSTED.
MY SHAME IS COMPLETE. I'M JUST LIKE THE GIRL IN THE MOVIE...
... ONLY GRAMPS IS MAXIM, THE EVIL LIBRARIAN IS MRS. DANVERS, AND GRANNY IS THE GHOST OF REBECCA, WHO HAUNTS ME. :SIGH:

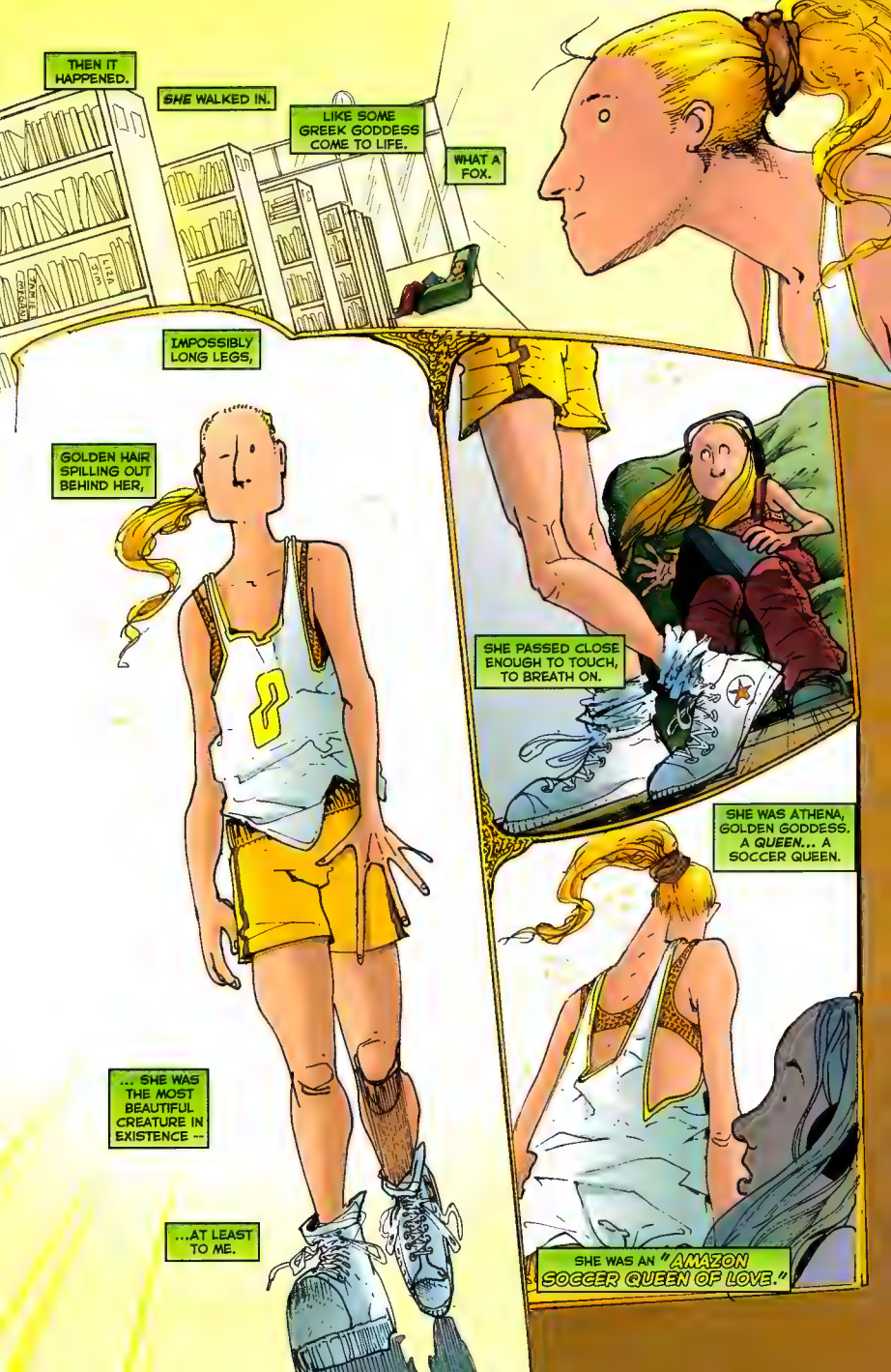

BACK AT HOME, ME N' GRAMPS TIPTOE IN, FOR FEAR OF UPSETTING GRANNY. GRAMPS WALKS ON EGGSHELLS TO KEEP HER HAPPY, WHICH ONLY MAKES HER MORE GROUCHY.
EVEN THOUGH SHE TAKES SUGAR PILLS, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO ACT LIKE SHE'S DYING.
I DON'T KNOW WHY. IT'S GRAMPS -- HE'S THE ONE THAT'S GONNA DITCH US, AND LEAVE ME HERE WITH HER.
NOW YOU'RE ALREADY ON *THIN ICE*, IGNORING GRANNY'S CALLS LIKE THAT. MEGAN, YOU'LL BE THE DEATH OF HER SOME DAY IF YOU KEEP MISBEHAVING! SHE *NEEDS* YOU.
WELL, SHE'S NOT THE *ONLY* ONE BEING IGNORED.
NO LIP, YOUNG LADY.
SEE, MOMMA -- THE HEADPHONES MAKE IT HARD FOR MEGGY TO HEAR THE PHONE.
WHINE WHINE YAK BLAH WHINE NE YAK YAK YAK WHINE WHINE WHINE BLAH BLAH
UH HUH.
YOU'RE RIGHT -- MAYBE SHE SHOULDN'T BE LISTENING TO ROCK MUSIC AT THE LIBRARY, ANYWAY.
SO THAT'S SETTLED! NO HEADPHONES AT THE LIBRARY, AND YOU ANSWER THE PHONE *EVERY TIME* GRANNY CALLS. GOT IT?
UH HUH.
OR...
... HOW 'BOUT I MAKE A *LIST* OF WHERE ALL YOUR STUFF IS SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO CALL ME OR DAD?
I DON'T LIKE LISTS.
SHE DON'T LIKE LISTS! MEGAN, SHE NEEDS *BOTH* OF US TO BE THERE FOR HER! YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE LIFE. THIS IS *HER* TIME. DON'T BE SELFISH.
DON'T FORGET MY DINNER. AND MY BEDPAN NEEDS CHANGING.
OK, MOMMA. JUS' A SEC.
WHEN YOU IGNORE HER NEEDS, YOU'RE ONLY HURTING YOURSELF. YOU'VE GOT TO GROW UP SOMEDAY, MEGAN. WE CAN'T BABY YOU FOREVER.
YEAH, WE KNOW WHO THE BABY OF *THIS* FAMILY IS.

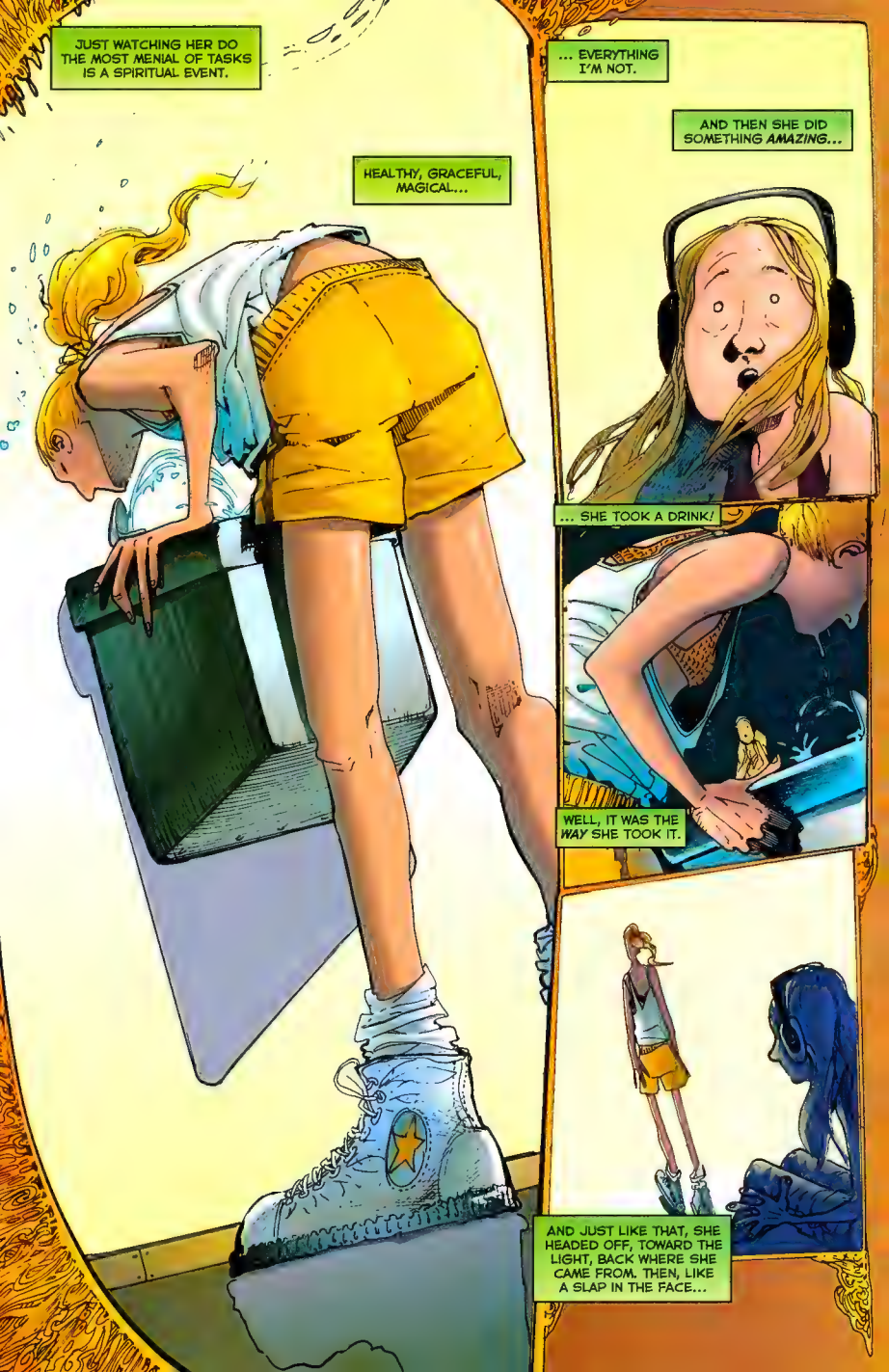

Ways To Torture Yourself #107
EARL!
COMING, MOMMA.
MEGAN DON'T MAKE ME NAG YOU. GET STARTED WITH THAT HOMEWORK.
NO PROBLEM, GRAMPS.
IF I CAN'T DO THIS, I'M PATHETIC
C'MON, MEGAN. IT'S BEEN 20 MINUTES AND YOU'RE JUST DIDDLING AROUND. JUST DO IT.
OK, I WILL.
BUT I WONT... I KNOW I WON'T -- I ALWAYS DO THIS.
IT'S BEEN AN HOUR. IF YOU WOULD'VE STARTED, YOU COULD'VE BEEN DONE BY NOW.
I WILL, IN A MINUTE. BUT I GOTTA SHARPEN MY PENCIL FIRST.
I GOTTA... UH... GO OUT... I WONT BE BACK TIL LATE, PUNKIN.
MAN, I'M GETTING SLEEPY. I'LL GET UP EARLY AND DO IT. IN THE MORNING...
I'M SICK OF HIM RAGGING ON ME. WISH HE'D JUST BUTT OUT.
YOU KNOW YOU WON'T, PRINCESS.
TONIGHT. DON'T LET ME DOWN.
TOMORROW. I PROMISE.
WHAT'S THE POINT? I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO GET ANYTHING DONE. LOSER.
I FEEL SO GUILTY. I'VE BLOWN IT ANYWAY. IT'S TOO LATE NOW, I'VE LET HIM DOWN. HE'S RIGHT -- I CAN'T FINISH ANYTHING.
BUT NEXT TIME, I'LL GET UP EARLY AND DO IT.
REALLY I WILL...
... NEXT... TIME...
... NE.....
... SNORRRRRE...

Blaming Others #368
RISE 'N SHINE, PUNKIN.
C'MON, MEGAN -- DON'T FIGHT ME ON THIS. GET UP, AND FINISH YOUR HOMEWORK.
I KNOW YOU GET ANGRY WHEN I HAVE TO GO OUT, BUT I'VE GOT NO CHOICE. I KNOW YOU'RE AFRAID I'M GONNA LEAVE. BUT NOTHING WILL HAPPEN TO ME UNTIL YOU'RE READY.
:YAWN: OK -- I'M JUST GONNA CATCH A FEW WINKS. :YAWN: THEN WE'LL GET UP.
WHY DOESN'T HE MAKE ME GET UP AND DO IT?
I PROMISE.
FINE! HE TALKS TO ME ALL NIGHT SO I CAN'T GET MY HOMEWORK DONE...
...THEN EXPECTS ME TO GET MYSELF UP! I CAN'T BE EXPECTED TO DO THAT. I'M JUST A KID.
YOU'RE GROUNDED FOR IGNORING GRANNY YEATERDAY.
BUT...
NO LIBRARY. STAY PUT -- I MEAN IT. DON'T LEAVE THIS HOUSE!!!
BUS STOP
YEAH... WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT.


WOW! I GOT HERE SO EARLY, THERE'S HARDLY ANYBODY AROUND. GOOD! THIS WAY, NOBODY WILL SEE ME BUILD MY SECRET NEST.
IF I CAN GET BACK HOME BEFORE GRAMPS GETS BACK, AND GRANNY DOESN'T FIND OUT I'M GONE, I MIGHT GET AWAY WITH THIS.
GOODY! DOOR TO THE MOVIE ROOM'S NOT LOCKED.
THIS CRACK GAVE ME AN IDEA. I'LL BUILD A SECRET CUBBYHOLE TO WATCH OLD MOVIES IN.
'COURSE I CAN'T LOCK THE DOOR, BUT BURIED BACK IN HERE, NOBODY CAN SEE WHAT I'M UP TO ANYWAY.
IT'LL BE MY SAFE PLACE, TO MAKE MYSELF HAPPY IN. I WON'T NEED ANYONE... I WON'T NEED SQUAT.
JUST CLOSE THE "SECRET DOORWAY"...
... PERFECT.
click
NOW TO RELAX WITH SOME NAT KING COLE TRIO AND MILLS BROS. WHILE IT'S STILL QUIET...

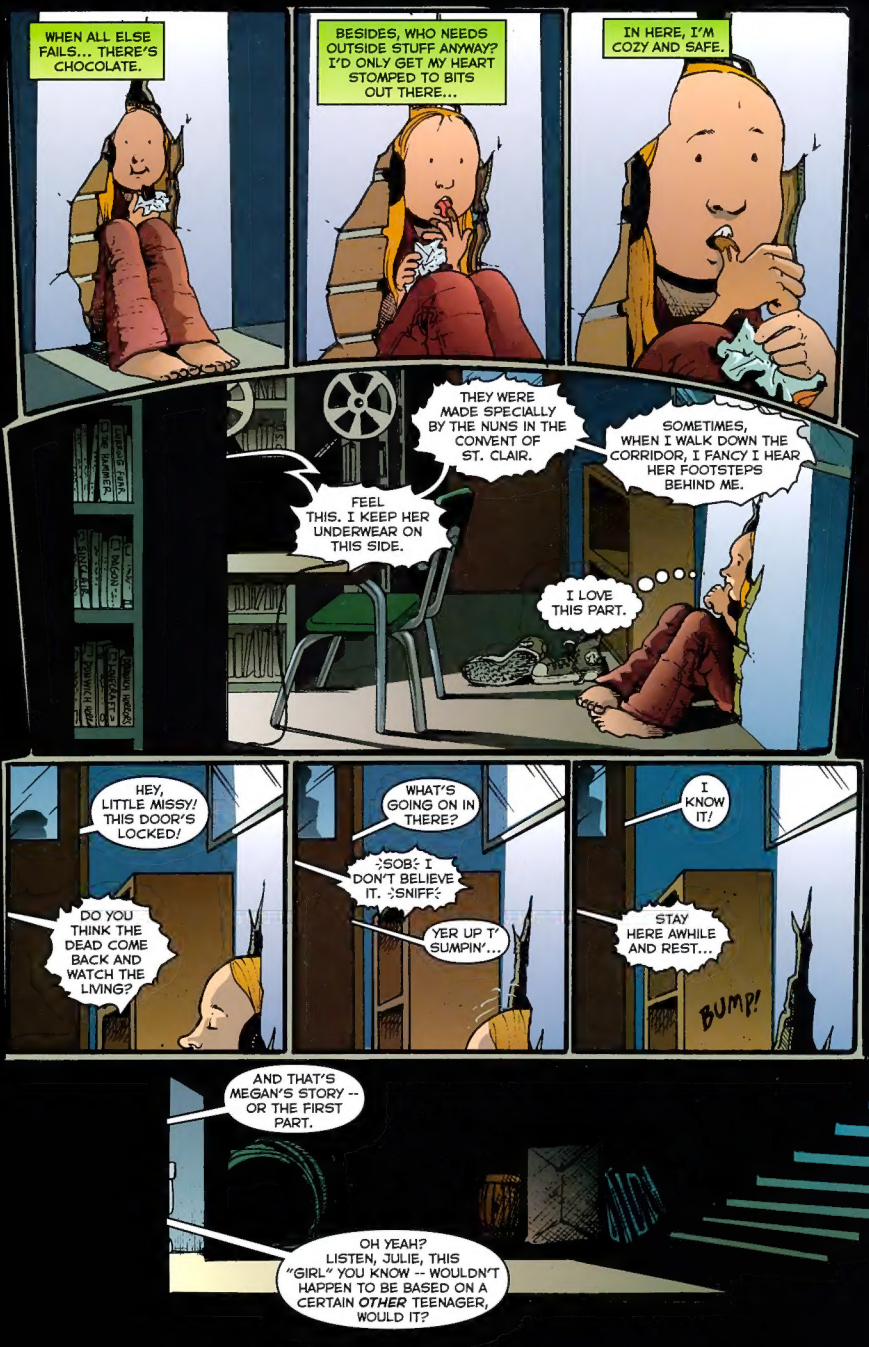

BOOGIE NIGHTS
BOOGIE NIGHTS
WHOOPTY-AAAH!
OH GOODY. LOOK WHO COMES TO THE PARK TO PLAY SOCCER EARLY. MY PALS..
GOD, HOW I MISSED 'EM.
SHOOT-SOMEBODY'S USING MY MOVIE ROOM. OH WELL, AT LEAST MY CRACK'S COVERED.
DIE, SOCCER SCUM, DIE, SOCCER SCUM, DIE, SOCCER SCUM...
LAST NIGHT I HAD A DREAM. I WAS BEING PULLED TOWARD THE EVIL DOOR! I TRIED TO RUN, BUT IT WAS USELESS! AS I WENT THROUGH IT, I BECAME AN OLD WOMAN.
I LOOKED ACROSS TO THE PARK AND SAW A BUNCH OF KIWIS WITH LITTLE UNIFORMS, PLAYING SOCCER. I WENT OVER AND STARTED EATING THEM, WHICH THEY DIDN'T SEEM TO MIND, AND, WELL, I WAS PRETTY HUNGRY, AFTER ALL.
I COULD FEEL THEM GIGGLING IN MY OLD-WOMAN BELLY, AND HAD JUST ABOUT FINISHED THE LAST ONE, WHEN MRS. DANVERS FROM MY OLD MOVIE SHOWED UP! SHE STARTED TO YELL AT ME, ONLY GRANNY'S VOICE CAME OUT.
SHE SAID I LET HER DOWN, AND GRAMPS WAS LEAVING BECAUSE I BLEW HEALTH CLASS, AND I FEEL SO GUILTY 'CAUSE I KNOW SHE'S RIGHT. THEN SHE HEARS LAUGHING COMING FROM INSIDE MY BELLY, AND KNEW I LIKED KIWIS. I WAS BUSTED. THEN I WOKE UP. WEIRD HUH? OH WELL -- ENOUGH DREAMS, ALREADY!


THEN IT HAPPENED.
SHE WALKED IN.
LIKE SOME GREEK GODDESS COME TO LIFE.
WHAT A FOX.
IMPOSSIBLY LONG LEGS,
GOLDEN HAIR SPILLING OUT BEHIND HER,
SHE PASSED CLOSE ENOUGH TO TOUCH, TO BREATH ON.
SHE WAS ATHENA, GOLDEN GODDESS. A QUEEN... A SOCCER QUEEN.
... SHE WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CREATURE IN EXISTENCE --
...AT LEAST TO ME.
SHE WAS AN "AMAZON SOCCER QUEEN OF LOVE."

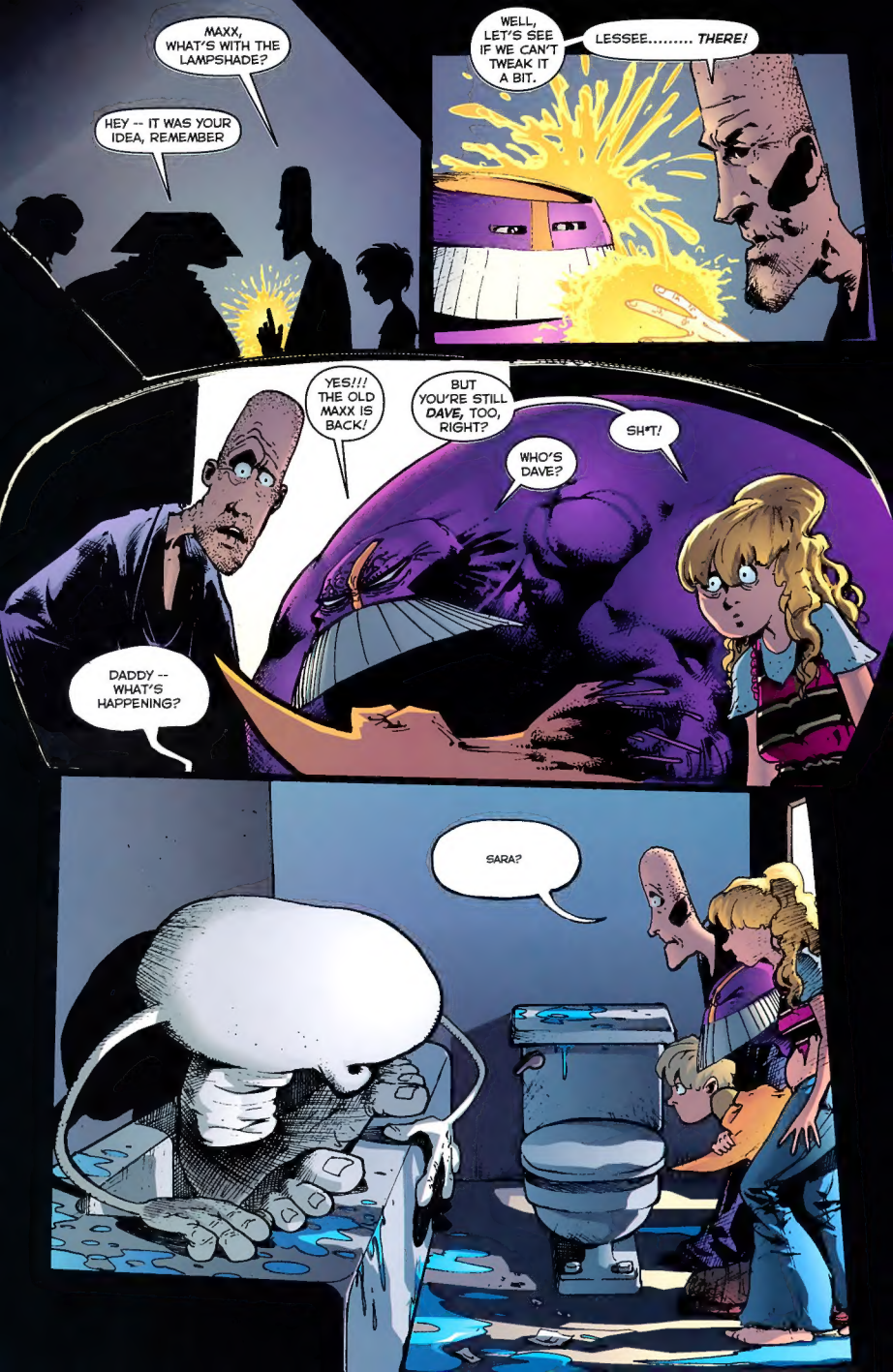

JUST WATCHING HER DO THE MOST MENIAL OF TASKS IS A SPIRITUAL EVENT.
HEALTHY, GRACEFUL, MAGICAL...
... EVERYTHING I'M NOT.
AND THEN SHE DID SOMETHING *AMAZING*...
... SHE TOOK A DRINK!
WELL, IT WAS THE *WAY* SHE TOOK IT.
AND JUST LIKE THAT, SHE HEADED OFF, TOWARD THE LIGHT, BACK WHERE SHE CAME FROM. THEN, LIKE A SLAP IN THE FACE...

IT HIT ME! MY MIND WENT BLANK AS I WONDERED WHY THIS SOCCER QUEEN HAD SUCH AN EFFECT ON ME.
FOR ONE THING, THIS GODDESS WAS MILES PAST THOSE BIMBOS IN THE PARK. SHE DIDN'T EVEN WEAR THE SAME UNIFORM -- SHE BELONGED TO SOME HIGHER RACE OF GOLDEN SOCCER WOMEN, WHO SURELY MUST LOVE '40'S MUSIC -- SHE WOULDN'T BE COOL IF SHE DIDN'T!
YEAH, SHE WAS BEYOND US MORTALS, FOR SURE.
OH GOD! WHAT IF SHE SAW ME -- GAWKING LIKE AN IDIOT AT HER? OH, GREAT! NOW SHE PROB'LY THINKS I'M SOME SORT OF PERVERT WHO'S STALKING HER!
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE!
GEEZ -- I GOTTA GET A LIFE.
SOMEBODY LIKE HER MUST BE USED TO HAVING PEOPLE STARE AT HER IN AWE. SHE'S THAT AMAZING! SHE'D UNDERSTAND ME LOOKING -- I'M SURE SHE WOULD.

WAIT -- DON'T GO! I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME!
THEN I SEE WHO SHE'S WITH.
MY WORST ENEMIES -- THOSE OBNOXIOUS DISCO IDIOTS.
HOW COULD ONE AS TRANSCENDENT AS HER HANG OUT WITH SUCH LOW-LIFE SCUM?
THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW I EXIST.
THE EVIL DOOR MOCKS MY FEAR OF EVEN CROSSING THE STREET AND TALKING TO HER.
EVEN IF I DID, WHAT WOULD I SAY?
"HI I'M MEGAN. WATCHING YOU TAKE A DRINK FROM THE WATER FOUNTAIN WAS THE MOST SPIRITUALLY ORGASMIC EXPERIENCE OF MY 14-YEAR-OLD VIRGINAL LIFE."


WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS... THERE'S CHOCOLATE.
BESIDES, WHO NEEDS OUTSIDE STUFF ANYWAY? I'D ONLY GET MY HEART STOMPED TO BITS OUT THERE...
IN HERE, I'M COZY AND SAFE.
THEY WERE MADE SPECIALLY BY THE NUNS IN THE CONVENT OF ST. CLAIR.
SOMETIMES, WHEN I WALK DOWN THE CORRIDOR, I FANCY I HEAR HER FOOTSTEPS BEHIND ME.
FEEL THIS. I KEEP HER UNDERWEAR ON THIS SIDE.
I LOVE THIS PART.
HEY, LITTLE MISSY! THIS DOOR'S LOCKED!
DO YOU THINK THE DEAD COME BACK AND WATCH THE LIVING?
WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?
:SOB: I DON'T BELIEVE IT. :SNIFF:
YER UP T' SUMPIN'...
I KNOW IT!
STAY HERE AWHILE AND REST...
BUMP!
AND THAT'S MEGAN'S STORY -- OR THE FIRST PART.
OH YEAH? LISTEN, JULIE, THIS "GIRL" YOU KNOW -- WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO BE BASED ON A CERTAIN *OTHER* TEENAGER, WOULD IT?

THIS GIRL LIVED WITH HER GRANDPARENTS, DAVE.
DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOU SPENT A WHOLE SUMMER WITH YOUR GRANDPARENTS ONCE?
YOU'RE FISHIN'. IT'S NOT IMPORTANT *WHO* SHE IS -- IT'S IMPORTANT WHAT SHE WENT THROUGH.
OK, WHAT'RE YOU GOING THROUGH, "MEGAN"?
MAXX, I'M NOT --
'SCUSE ME, BUT I UNDERSTAND YOU CALLED.
WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME. JULIE'S HEARING SARA'S VOICE IN --
SARA'S NO LONGER IN HER OUTBACK. AND SHE'S NOT WATER, EITHER. SHE HASN'T GOT A BODY TO RETURN TO. THE QUESTION IS: WHERE IS SHE?
THE WOMAN I BROUGHT IS HER ONLY CHANCE TO STRAIGHTEN IT ALL OUT. SHE'S WAITING OUTSIDE. I BELIEVE YOU KNOW HER AS...
HEY MOM, LOOK -- THE *FOOTBALL THING'S* WAKING UP!


MAXX, WHAT'S WITH THE LAMPSHADE?
HEY -- IT WAS YOUR IDEA, REMEMBER
WELL, LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T TWEAK IT A BIT.
LESSEE..... THERE!
YES!!! THE OLD MAXX IS BACK!
BUT YOU'RE STILL DAVE, TOO, RIGHT?
SH*T!
WHO'S DAVE?
DADDY -- WHAT'S HAPPENING?
SARA?